

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
WESTERN DIVISION**

ADAM JONES, et al.,	}	
	}	
Plaintiffs,	}	
	}	
v.	}	Case No.: 7:19-CV-403-RDP
	}	
BUZZFEED, INC., et al.,	}	
	}	
Defendants.	}	

STIPULATION AND ORDER

This case is before the court on Defendants’ request to seek discovery from Michael W. Rondini. Defendants seek to discover documents relating to a criminal investigation from the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Office for use in defending against a defamation action brought by plaintiffs Adam Jones and Joshua Hastings (“Plaintiffs”), who conducted the investigation and have alleged that they were defamed by two *BuzzFeed* articles reporting on it (the “Articles”).

The Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Office cannot produce “investigative reports” or other material for use in a civil action absent an order “issued by a court of record upon proof by substantial evidence, that the moving party will suffer undue hardship and that the records, photographs or witnesses are unavailable from other reasonable sources.” *See* Code of Ala. § 12-21-3.1(c). However, the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Office has indicated that it will produce the information sought by Defendants if they obtain an order from this court directing it to be produced.

The clerk of this court has indicated to Defendants and the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Office that it is amenable to entering an order upon stipulation directing the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Office to produce the documents demanded by Defendants. Plaintiffs have indicated


that they will not oppose an order directing the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office to produce the documents demanded by Defendants.

The court finds that Defendants would suffer undue hardship if the documents requested from the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Department are withheld because they are material to Plaintiffs' defamation claims and the documents requested – including a full set of the original investigative file materials – are available only from the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Department.

It is **HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED** and **DECREED** that the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office is instructed to release the following documents to Defendants with social security numbers, student numbers, driver's license numbers and NCIC reports (if any) redacted:

- a. A complete copy of the investigatory file compiled during the investigation of the alleged sexual assault involving Megan Rondini and Terry Jackson "T.J." Bunn Jr.
- b. All non-privileged documents relating to Megan Rondini.
- c. Documents sufficient to establish the existence of any investigations of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment or any other crime of a sexual nature involving Terry Jackson "T.J." Bunn Jr.
- d. All non-privileged communications between Terry Jackson "T.J." Bunn Jr. and employees or representatives of the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's office.
- e. All documents relating to Plaintiffs' disciplinary records.
- f. All documents relating to any complaints against or investigations of Plaintiffs by any law enforcement agency, regardless of the outcome of such investigation.
- g. All awards, commendations or letters from citizens thanking or rewarding Plaintiffs for their service as law enforcement officers.

DONE and **ORDERED** this February 24, 2020.



R. DAVID PROCTOR
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE